

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 30, 2014

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Archives

Print Page

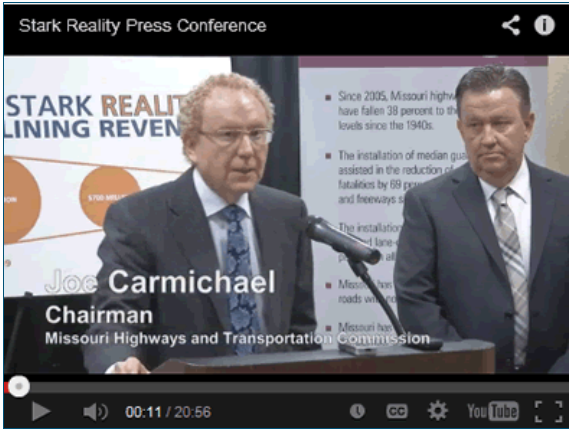
Print
Entire Edition

Bleak Financial Forecast Presented at State Transportation Conference

by Bob Brendel

Just a few weeks ago at their January 8 meeting, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission announced the difficult decision to stop adding new projects to Missouri's five-year construction budget and to suspend MoDOT's popular cost-share program. It was a decision based on uncertainty about the future of federal funding, declining fuel tax proceeds and the increasing costs of doing business.

That decision and more details about MoDOT's bleak financial forecast were shared on January 23 at the Missouri Transportation Conference in Jefferson City. Commission Chairman Joe Carmichael, MoDOT Director Dave Nichols, and MoDOT Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger discussed the topic in detail for those attending the conference and the press briefing.



Commission Chairman Joe Carmichael talks about MoDOT's 'crisis of progress' with a crowd of reporters at the Missouri Transportation Conference.

"Believe me when I say this is not what we wanted to do," said Carmichael. "When considering the financial forecast for the rest of this decade, the commission had no choice. In a few short years, we aren't even going to have enough money to maintain the system we have today."

There are many reasons for the funding downturn, which MoDOT leadership and the Commission have predicted for several years. Fuel tax revenues have become a diminishing revenue stream as cars become more fuel efficient and people drive less, while the costs of doing business are increasing.

Inflation has decreased MoDOT's purchasing power by more than 50 percent. What was 17 cents (state fuel tax per gallon) of purchasing power in 1992 is now about eight cents and decreasing each year.

The cost of asphalt, concrete and steel – the staples of the transportation industry – are as much as 200 percent more than they were in 1992. And employee healthcare and retirement costs have also steadily risen. The looming insolvency of the Federal Highway Trust Fund – expected in the fall – is a big reason, too.

MoDOT projects its annual construction program, which just a few years ago was \$1.3 billion, will be just over \$700 million in 2015 before dropping to \$325 million per year from 2017 through 2019.

"The baseline amount we need to keep our system of roads and bridges in its current condition is \$485 million," Nichols said. "When we fall below that number, our system will begin to deteriorate."

Carmichael said the Commission opted to take this action now, rather than wait, because this is the time of year when MoDOT and its local planning partners begin to prioritize future projects in order to add an additional year to the five-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

"It makes no sense to add projects that eventually increase our maintenance responsibility when we won't be able to maintain what we have today," Carmichael said.

He emphasized, however, that projects already in the STIP are the Commission's commitment to Missouri taxpayers, and they will be delivered. Some projects may be delayed a year, but they will be completed.

Nichols noted this bleak financial forecast is both a federal and a state problem.

"In 2020, we won't have enough state revenue to be able to match federal funds and those unmatched dollars will be directed to other states and lost to Missouri forever," said Nichols. "If our federal funds would increase, we'll be unable to match them even sooner."

"I'd call it a crisis of progress," Carmichael said. "In the last decade, MoDOT made great progress and demonstrated the kinds of improvements it could deliver with resources. But continued progress in delivering safety improvements and the types of projects that stimulate the economy and create jobs is coming to a halt in the near future."

Nichols said MoDOT has taken dramatic steps to reduce costs and form a leaner, more efficient agency.

"We've reduced staff by 1,200, closed facilities and reduced the size of our fleet. Those actions have saved \$500 million," he said. "But we can't cut our way to a solution for this transportation funding problem."

"We've done a lot of great things in the last 10 years to make our roads safer, to bring innovation



to our projects, and to deliver some really big initiatives. But without a solution, we can't do any more going forward."

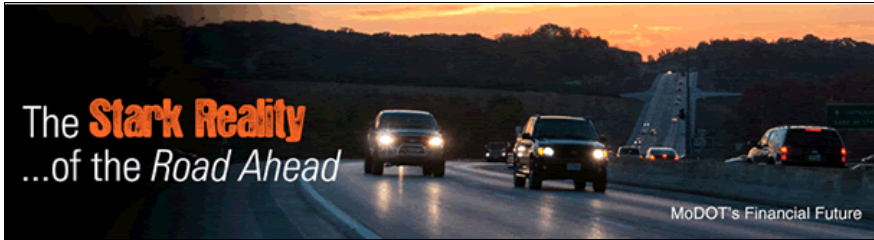
For more information and video from the transportation conference, visit <http://modot.org/StarkReality.html>.

MoDOT Director Dave Nichols answers questions during the news conference about MoDOT's financial forecast.

Team Talk

by Roberta Broeker

As the chief financial officer for our department, it is my job to oversee MoDOT's financial and administrative operations, including our budget. As you may have heard, MoDOT's financial situation has been getting some attention because we face a very real future of declining funding that could affect Missouri's transportation system. I want to use this Team Talk column to give you my perspective on the situation and help you understand how it affects you.



There are two things to understand right off the bat. First, the reality of our financial situation is not a surprise. We've known about the decline in transportation funding for years. We have prepared for the day when this would happen. It is why we went through the Bolder Five-Year Direction. Had we not taken that action, our construction budget would already be \$100 million per year less than it is now.

Second, MoDOT's funding is complex and dependent on many factors. We can't point the finger at any one funding source as the reason why we're in our current predicament. Shrinking fuel tax revenue, an insolvent Federal Highway Trust Fund, and inflation all play a part.

When the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission decided at their January meeting to stop adding projects to the STIP, it was meant to add some flexibility for our future. When a project goes on the STIP, it is a firm commitment from MoDOT and the Commission that the project will be delivered, and it means we have the funds to pay for it. The STIP is a five year program that's updated every year, but we never fully program each year because we need the ability to react to our changing needs. By not adding any additional projects to the 2015-2019 STIP, we increase our flexibility and assure that we won't promise something we can't deliver.

And what about the suspension of the cost-share program? When it began 15 years ago, it turned \$453 million in state investment into \$1.1 billion worth of projects because we partnered with local governments to make those transportation improvements happen. That partnership has been a great way to leverage funding and make the most of every dollar. If MoDOT has to focus on maintaining the existing system, we simply can't put money from our construction budget into building new projects. It will take every dime we can find to hold the system together.

There is an obvious solution to MoDOT's situation. We need more revenue, and while we can't say where that funding should come from, we can support our transportation partners at the state and federal level and give them the information they need to figure out a way to make that happen.

I know you have one other very important question about all of this, and I don't know if I can give you the answer you want to hear. How will this affect you and the work you do for MoDOT? We've already taken the right actions to create an appropriate-sized department for the program we have today and in 2015 and 2016. In 2017, when the construction budget drops to \$325 million, it's hard to say what everyday life will be at MoDOT. There are too many factors out of our control to predict it.

Missouri isn't the only state facing a stark new reality for transportation. But we are a resilient and dedicated team and over the last eight years we've shown our state the impact that transportation funding can have on the quality of life in Missouri. We face a great challenge, but I know we will continue working hard to meet our mission and values regardless of what the future holds.

MoDOT Now Brings Daily News to Employees

By Holly Dentner

This February, MoDOT will launch an exciting new communication tool that will bring daily news to employees.

MoDOT Now is the latest way you can stay in touch with the department, and it's brought to you in a way that's becoming more familiar and relevant to us all: as an app for your smartphone or tablet.

"We are always looking for ways to reach employees and help them feel connected to what's going on in the department," said Matt Hiebert, customer relations manager. "Since Connections is published only twice a month, MoDOT Now fills that news gap by leveraging app technology to the fullest."

The app is available for Apple and Android devices. MoDOT Now will also be available in a desktop version that employees can read at the office.

"You can get the latest MoDOT news on your work smartphone, at your desk, or on your own personal phone," said Hiebert. "There will be fresh news every morning, but making MoDOT Now available in a variety of formats means you can check it when it's convenient for you."

MoDOT Now is divided into three sections: MoDOT News, Videos, and Other News.

The "MoDOT News" section features important department information, district and division news, policy updates, and safety tips.

"Videos" will range from roadway safety public service announcements to messages from MoDOT leadership.

The "Other News" section will bring something new to readers by collecting interesting, innovative, or entertaining transportation news links from around the county and the globe.



The app will even have current local weather data and a link to MoDOT’s Traveler Information App.

MoDOT Now launches on Feb. 5. Employees with MoDOT-issued phones or tablets will find the app in the MoDOT App Store. Those employees who wish to put it on their personal phones will find it in the iTunes Store and Android Marketplace on Feb. 5. The desktop version will be placed as an icon on all MoDOT-issued computers.

OS 7 or above is required for iPhone users to download the app. Android users will need to make sure they’re running version 2.3.3 or higher.

Employee Focus Groups Will Help Shape New Employee Survey

by Jim Dickson

Think about how carefully we plan parts of our transportation system. Even with the best internal and external experts on the project, we still spend months looking at options and talking with our customers to provide the best solution. That’s the same approach the department will take to develop a new employee survey.

“We want our new survey to dig deeper into how we live our values and what it feels like to be a department employee,” said MoDOT Director Dave Nichols. “So, before we even write one question on the survey, we will conduct employee focus groups to help us know how and what to ask employees.”

The employee focus groups will be conducted by an external organization over the next few weeks at locations across the state. Nichols added he hoped employees would be open and honest during the focus group sessions. Phillips and Associates, Inc. from St. Louis will be leading the sessions and using the input to design the new survey. Employees will have the opportunity to fill out an electronic or paper survey around the middle of March.



“Listening to employees is an important part of my job and every supervisor at MoDOT,” said Nichols. “This will be a great chance for us to hear what employees have to say and understand how we can move this organization forward.”

You can view a special video message about the new employee survey from Director Nichols at <http://youtu.be/lKjJP5dqTnc>.

Final Days to Comment on Medical Insurance Proposed Changes

by Jeff Padgett

We’ve had good feedback from employees on the proposed medical plan changes, over 70 comments so far. I want to thank everyone who has taken time to submit a comment, and to the EAC for collecting the feedback.



There’s still time to voice your opinion. The EAC is collecting employee comments through Feb. 1.

Based on the feedback received, we’ve continued to update the FAQ’s on the webpage. If you haven’t looked at the FAQ’s recently, please do so; there is good information that will help you better understand the proposed changes.

Visit the webpage to submit a comment and to review the plan details and FAQ’s – [2015 Proposed Medical Plan Changes](#).

We are summarizing all comments and will provide those to the Commission for review.

If you have specific questions on how these changes may affect you, please contact your local benefits staff for assistance.

Microsoft Outlook

Migration for Districts / Divisions Complete

By Amie Peters

This past week we hit a huge milestone in the Outlook Migration project as the last Lotus Notes users were ushered into Outlook. With the bulk of the heavy lifting done, we can begin to focus our attention on fine tuning and discovering all that Outlook can offer. As I mentioned in my last article, we rolled out other tools in conjunction with Outlook that complement and build onto its collaboration features.

One such tool is Lync. You won't find it inside the email client like SameTime displayed inside Lotus Notes; instead it's a separate application found under the START menu. However, Lync is integrated with Outlook and other Microsoft applications in that it displays a listing of your contacts inside those applications and allows you to initiate a conversation, and shows availability and other information about people you interact with on a regular basis.

With Lync, collaboration has never been easier. If you think of Lync as only instant messaging you're missing out on some great productivity options. This timesaving tool creates a whole new dimension when it comes to meetings, discussions, and demonstrations. Need to give a presentation? No need to travel, invite others to view slides or PowerPoint presentations without leaving your office. Make handouts available to participants, or quickly send a document to one person. You can also share your desktop with other individuals and allow them to take control. This is ideal when collaborating in a team editing session. Our IS Service Desk has found this very effective when providing assistance to resolve hardware/software issues. Need to draw out your ideas or flowchart a process? Lync has you covered with a whiteboard feature that allows you to take notes, or sketch ideas as a group. If you're interested in learning more about what Lync can do to boost productivity in your office check out our [training page](#).



Make Your Bowl Party SUPER – Designate a Driver *Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk.*

by Kelly Jackson

The Super Bowl is one of America's most highly anticipated sports events, when friends and family gather in homes, bars and restaurants to celebrate. As Super Bowl Sunday approaches and football fans across the country prepare for the game, the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety wants to remind everyone to designate a sober driver because – Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk.

"There were 198 people killed and 583 seriously injured on Missouri roadways in 2013 crashes involving a substance-impaired driver," said Leanna Depue, executive committee chair for the coalition. "Before choosing to drink, choose your team's MVP – a sober designated driver."

The coalition offers the following party plans to make sure you and your guests arrive home safely this Sunday night. If you're attending a Super Bowl party or watching the game at a sports bar or restaurant:

- Designate your sober driver, or plan another way to get home safely before the party begins.
- If you don't have a designated driver, then ask a sober friend for a ride home; call a cab, friend, or family member to come and get you; or just stay for the night.
- Never let friends drive if they've had too much to drink.
- If you know someone who is about to drive while impaired, take the keys and help them make safe travel arrangements.

If you're hosting a Super Bowl party:

- Make sure all of your guests designate a sober driver in advance, or arrange for alternate transportation to ensure they get home safely.
- Serve food and include non-alcoholic beverages at the party.
- Stop serving alcohol at the end of the third quarter of the game and begin serving coffee and dessert.
- Keep the numbers for local cab companies handy, and take the keys away from anyone who has had too much to drink.

Make this year's bowl party SUPER. Whether you have had one too many or are way over the limit, impaired driving is not worth causing a traffic crash, serious injury, or even death. Missouri law makes it clear that driving while impaired has serious consequences.

For more information on highway safety, go to saveMOLives.com. You can also follow SaveMOLives on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, #saveMOLives, drivesoberMO and #ArriveAlive.



Fatality Update

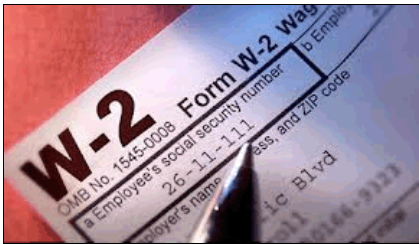


What's Happening



Chat With the Chief

Remember to check out Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger's blog post and see Ed's recent post on our financial forecast - [Chat with the Chief](#).

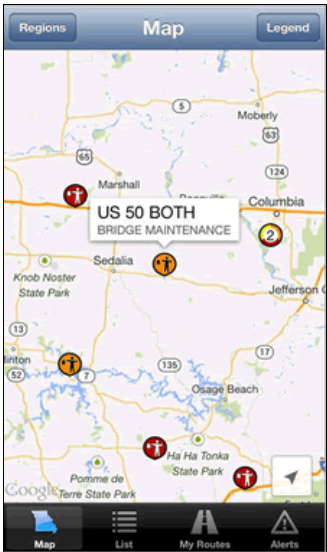


In The Mail and Online

W-2's have been mailed to employees at the address listed on their Jan. 15 check stub.

You can also view your 2013 W-2 and past W-2's beginning with 2007 on the State of Missouri Employees' Self-Service website.

ESS is available to current and former employees who have received a paycheck issued through SAM II during the past 5 years. Employees can register for ESS from any desktop or device with Internet access at <https://ess.mo.gov>.



Travel Information Map App Improved

The latest release of the MoDOT Traveler Information Map is now available in Apple and Google Play stores.

- Updates include:
- More visible road condition lines. (lines are now wider and solid so colors don't blend with map colors on another layer).
 - Road conditions now appear when the map loads initially rather than users having to pinch and zoom for segments to appear.
 - The legend and layers have been separated. The legend is now a floating button at the bottom right of the screen while layers is a predominately labeled button top right.

You can visit the app stores, or click here to link from MoDOT's webpage.
<http://www.modot.org/>

January Retirements

Koelle Gene Barbour – NW – 35 years
Marvin Lee Jackson – NW – 27 years
Gary Lee Scheib – NW – 20 years
James C. Wrenn – NW – 16 years
Terry L. Bell – NE – 29 years

Charles O. Roberts – NE – 10 years
Wess Griff Murray – KC – 36 years
Jerry Dale Hanger – KC – 17 years
Christopher L. Riney – CD – 39 years
Nathan Charles Jett – CD – 29 years

Theodore H. Lessman – SW – 30 years
Robert Michael Edwards – SW – 14 years
Darrell D. Huff – SE – 35 years
Ronald D. Robertson – SE – 30 years
Dwight D. Vaughn – SE – 28 years

Dennis L. Hollingsworth - NE – 29 years
Jon Cleary Brown - NE – 28 years
Gary W. Howell - NE – 24 years
Terry L. Burris - NE – 21 years
Thomas Kenny Bichsel - NE – 14 years

Michael George Smith - CD – 21 years
Thomas E. Green - CD – 15 years
Danielle L. Nester - SL – 31 years
Ronnie Keith Lammert - SL – 31 years
Pamela Jean Carnahan - SL – 26 years

Janice C. Duke - SE – 12 years
Lawrence Diaz - CO – 15 years
Carole Ann Hopkins - CO – 19 years
Charles Arthur Stanford - CO – 18 years

In Memoriam

Anthony Delce (active employee)
Kansas City District – January 15

Clifford Runcorn
former D8 – December 3
Charlie Holliday
former D6 – December 18
Lesley Borgstadt
former D4 – December 19
Earnest Pickett
former D2 – December 23
Chester Riley
former D9 – December 25

Donald Smith
former D8 – December 31
Levern Steele
former D2 – December 31
Margaret McDonnel
former D6 – January 2
Darrell Barnes
former D3 – January 7
Bradley Richter
former D8 – January 16
Gene Richardson
former D8 – January 17

Rex Clark
former D8 – January 18
Glenn Blackwell
former D8 – January 19
Robert Maher
CO – January 21
John Nations
former D2 – January 22
William Nims
CO – January 25

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Customer Relations - MoDOT
P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840 / www.modot.org

Editor: Tammy Wallace

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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January 30, 2014



- Home
- Central Office

Districts

- Northwest
- Northeast
- Kansas City
- Central
- St. Louis
- Southwest
- Southeast

- Archives
- Print Page
- Print Entire Edition

MoDOT Launches Freight Plan

Goal is identifying strategic projects that can make significant improvements to the state's freight system.

by Bob Brendel

MoDOT has launched the Missouri Freight Plan, the next step in a process begun in 2013 to develop the state's long-range transportation plan. Statewide freight forums, designed to obtain significant input into the plan from freight stakeholders began Wed., Jan. 29 and will continue through Feb. 7.



Click above to watch a video about freight movement in Missouri.

Freight moved by trucks, barges, planes and trains is an essential part of the state's economy. In 2012, for example, Missouri exported \$13.9 billion in freight. In developing the Freight Plan, MoDOT will work with freight partners to help itself - and the state as a whole - better understand the cost to the Missouri economy if the state's freight network stagnates or deteriorates.

"Freight stakeholders in Missouri know better than we do what they need to make their businesses competitive," said MoDOT Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger. "We want to hear their thoughts, whether they're for improvement projects, policy changes or other ideas."

The Freight Plan will describe Missouri's existing freight transportation system and provide MoDOT with the ability to articulate what freight projects would be most helpful to the state should additional funds be made available in the future.

"Of course, that takes resources that we don't have right now," Hassinger said. "But if we don't take this deeper look into the situation, we'll never know what our best options are for the time when we can make these important investments."

The plan follows up on information gained during the first phase of developing a long-range transportation plan. In 2013, MoDOT had conversations throughout the state in which it learned that Missourians want a safe, reliable and economically prosperous transportation system.

The effort to develop the Freight Plan will involve a series of stakeholder interviews, freight forums and business forums, each aimed at reaching key audiences involved in Missouri's freight system. Freight and industry stakeholders - such as logistics directors, shipping managers and economic development professionals - are invited to the freight forums to discuss issues, needs, concerns and opportunities in the state.



MoDOT anticipates the draft freight plan to be prepared for review by June 2014, with a final report in September 2014.

Information about the plan can be found on the website - <http://mofreightplan.org/>.

Freight Forum Schedule – NOTE: Central and Northwest District forums were held Jan. 29 and 30.

To participate, freight and industry stakeholders - such as logistics directors, shipping managers and economic development professionals - should RSVP to Chelsey Smith at 816-627-4768 chsmith@burnsmcd.com.

Kansas City District

Hosted by Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
Union Station, Chamber Board Room
30 West Pershing, Kansas City

Southeast District

Southeast Missouri State University
River Campus, Glenn Convocation Center
518 S Fountain St, Cape Girardeau
Wednesday, February 5

Southwest District

Hosted by Springfield-Branson National Airport Board Room
2300 N Airport Blvd, Springfield
Friday, February 7

Friday, January 31 9 - 11:30 a.m.	9 - 11:30 a.m.	9 - 11:30 a.m.
Northeast District Hosted by Hannibal-LaGrange University Partee Center, Page Dining Room 2800 Palmyra Rd, Hannibal Tuesday, February 4 9 - 11:30 a.m.	St. Louis District MoDOT Transportation Management Center 14301 South Outer 40 Rd, Chesterfield Thursday, February 6 1 - 3 p.m.	

Central Office Happenings

Cardiovascular Health 101 Living a Hunter Gather Lifestyle in Modern America

By Dr. Alan Rauba
Feb. 5 - 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Human Resources Training Room B, 601 West Main

Dr. Alan Rauba is a Jefferson City Medical Group physician specializing in Endocrinology and Internal Medicine, with a practice focused on Diabetes and heart disease prevention.

February is National Heart Disease Awareness Month

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the heart disease statistics are scary:

- About 600,000 people die of heart disease in the United States every year—that's one in every four deaths.
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women. More than half of the deaths due to heart disease in 2009 were in men.
- Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease, killing more than 385,000 people annually.
- Every year about 715,000 Americans have a heart attack. Of these, 525,000 are a first heart attack and 190,000 happen in people who have already had a heart attack.
- Coronary heart disease alone costs the United States \$108.9 billion each year. This total includes the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity.



Now for the good news: many of the health issues that predispose Americans to heart disease are preventable! Come learn how you can take control of your heart health with Dr. Rauba.

The Central Office MEE Zone is sponsoring this free seminar. Attendees will receive one hour of LMS credit for attending (using your MEE Zone hours).

Space is limited, so check with your supervisor and sign up through the LMS Student Center - [Sign Up](#)

Remember, full-time employees have 24 MEE Zone Hours to use annually. Take some MEE time!



Central Office employees are voting for their favorite entries in the annual aviation art contest.

Cast Your Vote!

Entries for the International Aviation Art Contest are in and your vote is needed. The theme for 2014 is “Flying Saves Lives”.

There are three categories: Junior (Ages 6-9), Intermediate (Ages 10-13) and Senior (Ages 14-17). Each entry should be judged for its creative use of this year’s theme in relation to the aviation world.

The artwork is lining the hallway of the Central Office on the ground floor near Multimodal Operations. Please stop by and vote for your favorite entrant in each category by Friday, Jan. 31.

The annual contest is sponsored by The National Association of State Aviation Officials, MoDOT and other organizations.



CPR Training Opportunities

Four new classes for CPR and first aid training are scheduled for March.

March 13 and 14

8 a.m. – 11 a.m. & 12 p.m. – 3 p.m. (each day)
Conference Room 100
105 W Capitol Ave.

To register for a class, email Joanie Prenger - Joanie.Prenger@modot.mo.gov



State Employee Blood Drive Results

The Red Cross thanks everyone who participated in the January drive.

During the four day drive 174 units were collected. Each unit of blood has the potential to save three different lives. That means that 522 hospital patients will be affected by participant’s generosity.

Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Opportunities

Further details will be forthcoming.
March 18, 19, 21 and 25.

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Northwest District

Home
Central Office

Districts

- Northwest
- Northeast
- Kansas City
- Central
- St. Louis
- Southwest
- Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print Entire Edition

Saying Goodbye With A Bang

Saying goodbye to an old friend and icon is never easy, but this was a slow, long goodbye that ended with a bang.

Long before the first preliminary public meetings were held in May 2001, engineers and local residents had been discussing the need for a new bridge on U.S. Hwy 159 connection in Holt County, Mo. to Rulo, Neb.

The old bridge, a truss bridge built in November 1939, was structurally deficient and functionally obsolete. It did not meet modern standards for width, vertical clearance or load capacity. While it had served the public well for all those years, a new, modern bridge was necessary.



The Nebraska Department of Roads compiled this video of the implosion from several different angles. Click on the photo to watch the implosion.

A ground breaking ceremony was held Sept. 19, 2010, for the new bridge, which was built approximately 650 feet south of the old bridge. Nebraska Department of Roads was the lead agency on the \$25.7 million bridge project. It took just under three years to complete, after a slight interruption in work due to the historic floods that inundated the area in 2011, with the grand opening and ribbon cutting held Sept. 1, 2013.

On Sunday, Jan. 19, 2014, the first phase of the implosion of the old bridge was watched by many and then shared via video by the Nebraska Department of Roads. The second phase for implosion has not been scheduled. Click on the photo to watch the implosion from several angles.

CPR Training

On Jan. 14 and 15, Senior Safety Officer Lee Bearce and Senior Office Assistant Amber Dydell led the first one-day first aid, CPR, child infant, AED and bloodborne pathogen courses of the new year. Thirty-five employees attended the training and are now CPR certified. After viewing several videos and study materials, the class participants practiced rescue breathing and chest compressions on both adult and infant practice dummies.



Seasonal Maintenance Worker Ken Strader



Senior Safety Officer Lee Bearce demonstrates proper hand placement for chest compressions on an adult.

practices rescue breathing on an adult. The use of breathing bags on both adult and infant dummies allowed the class participants to ensure the victims lungs were inflating with each breath.



Seasonal Maintenance Worker Martel Stewart tilts the head of the infant dummy back to clear the airway before beginning rescue breathing. Without a clear airway, the infant's lungs would not inflate.



Seasonal Maintenance Worker Jeremiah Wideman practices rescue breathing on an infant. Each student practiced breathing and chest compressions on both adult and infants.

For more info

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Northwest District
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Marcia.Johnson@modot.mo.gov

3602 N. Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399

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Northeast
District

Home

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print
Entire Edition

Students, Seatbelts & Safety!



The results are in for the 2013 Battle of the Belt competition; the northeast area has 41 schools, 28 of those registered for the competition, and 22 schools actively participated and completed the program. We thank them for their hard work and dedicated efforts to keep teen drivers safe, and make the Battle of the Belt program so successful!

Congratulations to the winning schools with above 90 percent seat belt usage.

Highest Overall \$500 and Gold Banner - Palmyra High School 99.45 percent seat belt usage
Most Improved \$500 - Palmyra High School 67.93 percent improvement from first to second check

Silver Banner - Warrenton High School 98.73 percent usage
Silver Banner - Atlanta High School 98.68 percent usage
Silver Banner - Highland Jr.-Sr. High School 96.12 percent usage
Silver Banner - Pike R-III Clopton High School 95.74 percent usage
Bronze Banner - South Shelby High School 94.03 percent usage
Bronze Banner - Monroe City R-1 High School 93.75 percent usage
Bronze Banner - Scotland County High School 93.26 percent usage
Bronze Banner - Montgomery County High School 92.94 percent usage
Bronze Banner - North Shelby High School 92.06 percent usage

Awards ceremonies will be set up with the winning schools during local basketball games in January and February. The winning schools are required to use the grant money to further traffic safety efforts in the schools or communities. The Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety, in conjunction with American Family Insurance and the Missouri Emergency Nurses Association sponsor the program along with the Missouri College of Emergency Physicians.

We hope the competition has instilled a good habit of encouraging our young drivers and passengers to use their seat belts. The ultimate winners are those who wear their seat belts every time they get into a vehicle.

Around the District...



Atlanta C-3 School continues to help get the message out about the importance of seat belt use, not only to it's students, but also to the community.



A blood drive was held at the Macon Regional Office Thursday, Jan. 16, netting 21 pints. Pictured here as donors are Brandi Baldwin, district utilities engineer, and Rochelle Martens, construction project office assistant. We thank everyone who were able to donate!

For more info

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Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 30, 2014



- Home
- Central Office

Districts

- Northwest
- Northeast
- Kansas City
- Central
- St. Louis
- Southwest
- Southeast

- Archives
- Print Page
- Print Entire Edition

Massive Transformer Move Reroutes Interstate Traffic

It was well past dark, temperatures were dropping, the wind was howling at more than 40 miles per hour at times and a hitch just developed in an effort to move a massive 480,000-pound transformer over MoDOT’s interstates in the Northland.

MoDOT Traffic Operations Supervisor Vernon Koch pushed doubt out of his mind when supervisors with Edwards Moving and Rigging explained that the “puller” truck had broken down, they would have to move the “pusher” truck from the back to the front of the 36-axle trailer and employ a big tow truck to push from the back. After all, they were committed to moving the transformer from Liberty to the Nashua Substation near Smithville, which would require closure of two interstate highways at times, traffic detours and possible delays late Thursday into early Friday morning. The show must go on.



Koch had been working with Edwards Moving, Liberty, the Missouri Highway Patrol, Kansas City Power & Light and other members of the MoDOT team since August to prepare for the mid-January event. By 10 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 16, the ponderous parade was on the highways. It was earlier than scheduled, but the Highway Patrol determined that traffic was light enough to take advantage of the added time and, if all went well, be off the highway well before the 7 a.m. Friday target date and morning rush hour.

The massive load (727,000 pounds, including a pusher tractor, a puller tractor and the 36-axle trailer) traveled on Interstates 35 and 435, on Missouri Routes 152 and 169, and local routes at times. Because of the size of the equipment and transporter – 18 feet, 6 inches tall and 195 feet long – the transformer had to travel on the opposite lanes of the interstates and cross the median at times to pass obstructions such as overhead signs and highway overpasses.



Closures included I-35 from Route 152 to Route 291 in both directions for up to 1 and one-half hours, and I-435 between Route 152 and Route 169 for up to four hours. Traffic was detoured to Route 152 and Route 169 to bypass the closure.

Television crews from all four Kansas City stations were on site throughout the night, watching as the procession moved slowly on its path, avoiding bridges and overpasses that couldn’t handle the weight or didn’t provide the overhead clearance for such a load.

By 6 a.m., before their target date, the crew had completed its route and was off the highways. Koch could now relax, head for home and sleep as he began a three-day holiday weekend.

A \$2-4 million transformer had made it from its manufacturing point in Mexico by rail to Liberty, then by land to the Nashua substation near Smithville, where soon it would step down 345,000 volts of electricity from KCPL’s Iatan generating plant and provide 161,000 volts for distribution throughout the Kansas City area. It had all gone smoothly because many professionals were good at their jobs and adapted to a hitch or two.

Public Meeting Presented Safety-Focused Route 50 Improvements

Closing direct access to a four-lane, divided Route 50 east of Blackwell Road to Route 7 has been discussed by MoDOT

and the City of Lee’s Summit for more than a decade. On Tuesday, Jan. 28, MoDOT and the City presented a plan to construct an outer road system designed to improve safety.

About 35 people turned out at Lee’s Summit City Hall for the two-hour open-house public meeting. Most supported the plan. The project also includes Lee’s Summit’s plan to construct a new interchange at Blackwell Road on the west end. Connecting the outer roads on the north and south side of Route 50 between Blackwell and Route 7 would eliminate direct access at several high-accident, high-fatality intersections, particularly at Smart Road and Milton Thompson Road.



Improvements around Route 50 and Blackwell include:

- A new interchange at Blackwell Road
- Extending Blackwell south to Oldham Parkway
- Extending Blue Parkway (north outer road) east to Route 7
- Extending Oldham Parkway (south outer road) east to Route 7

Improvements at Route 50 and Route 7 include:

- New traffic signals and turn lanes at the ramps to and from Route 50
- Several new and improved turn lanes at the north and south outer road intersections

Most of the \$21.2 million project will be funded by the City of Lee’s Summit. MoDOT will commit about \$10 million for its portion of the interchange and \$5.6 million to construct the outer roads. The project is scheduled for 2015 construction. Learn more [about this project on our website](#).

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To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 30, 2014

Central
District

[Home](#)

[Central Office](#)

Districts

[Northwest](#)

[Northeast](#)

[Kansas City](#)

[Central](#)

[St. Louis](#)

[Southwest](#)

[Southeast](#)

[Archives](#)

[Print Page](#)

[Print
Entire Edition](#)

Koestner Selected to Participate in Leadership Jefferson City Program

Central District Assistant Engineer Travis Koestner is one of just 30 people selected for Leadership Jefferson City, a program designed to identify and motivate emerging leaders by exposing them to the opportunities, realities and challenges within the community.

“Being selected presents a great opportunity to learn more about Jefferson City and what motivates its people and businesses,” said Koestner. “Leadership Jefferson City is a really prestigious program and it fills up quickly every year, so it is an honor to be selected. I’m excited to participate and to have the opportunity to network and pick the brains of some of Jefferson City’s brightest young leaders.”

Leadership Jefferson City meetings are presented by the Jefferson City Chamber of Commerce and take place from January to May. The program covers topics such as team building, diversity, education, technology, volunteerism, the history of Jefferson City, industry, government, wellness, social services, media, and arts and recreation.

Even though this year’s class has just begun, Koestner said he’s already understood the value of the program and why it’s been around for more than 27 years. The first day of the program was dedicated to the subject of volunteerism.

“That topic opened the eyes of the class to the importance of working together and remembering that we can’t wait for someone else to handle the challenges that face our community,” said Koestner. “It also reminds us to actively participate in our community and to remember those in need of food or monetary or emotional assistance. Each year the class does a project to help out the community, and I’m looking forward to working with the team as we develop our service project.”

As for what he hoped to learn over the five-month journey, Koestner said he hoped to gain an even better understanding of the local community.

“I want to learn how we can better serve our customers in the area,” said Koestner. “Every community has its own identity. And we as leaders have to work together to help provide transportation solutions that will help grow Missouri.”



MoDOT Assistant District Engineer Travis Koestner speaks at a ribbon cutting ceremony late last year in Rolla. Koestner is one of just 30 people selected to participate in this year's Leadership Jefferson City program, presented by the Jefferson City Chamber of Commerce.

District Employees Recognized for Service

District employees were honored for 5, 10 and 15 years of service to MoDOT at the annual Service Awards ceremony held recently at the Cuba Lakes Country Club

in Cuba.

James Collison, Cindy Dzurick, Lester Henson, Larry Johnson and Randel Sharp were among those honored for 15 years of service at the ceremony.

Those receiving safety awards at the banquet were Wilber Barton, Cindy Dzurick, Larry Johnson, Don Ramirez and Kenneth Thomas.

Others receiving service awards at the ceremony were:

10 Years

- John Baker
- James Blankenship
- Eugene Davis
- Kevin Heavin
- Jared Housewright
- Beth Humphrey
- George Lane
- Justin Neuman
- Jeffrey Watson
- Jeannie West

5 Years

- Linzy Agnew
- Trent Brooks
- Johnathan Evans
- Curtis Holland
- Brent Holtsclaw
- Dale Hutto
- Scott Lyons
- Jeffrey Manthey
- Brenda McClain
- Donald Miller
- Felipe Ortega
- Adam Parrett
- John Rice
- Susan Ringelsen
- James Simmons
- Jeffrey Withington



Around the District



Central District employees gathered to offer well wishes to Nicole Hood. Nicole was recently named Assistant State Design Engineer and will be stepping down as District Design Engineer this week. Nicole was a valued employee of the district with more than 15 years of service and will be missed. Good luck Nicole! We wish you much success and happiness in your new job!



MoDOT Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger speaks to a group of district employees at the Cuba maintenance facility on Jan. 24. Hassinger was making a visit to the district to answer questions and to gather employee input on the issues facing MoDOT now and in the near future.



Jason Greer of Greer Consulting, an employee relations consulting firm in St. Louis, recently gave a presentation about the Neuroscience of Diversity to Central District managers. In the photo, Greer (left) role plays with MoDOT Maintenance Superintendents Roy Kempker (center) and Jim Hager (right) about how to engage employees. He did a bad cop/good cop routine and showed them how body language, facial expressions, language and voice tone all send a message and elicit different reactions.



New MoDOT Central District employees (from left) Materials Inspector Stephen Amburn and Highway Designers Cyrus Meller, Tyler Frazier and Quentin Stampley participate in Gear Up orientation training at the district office. Welcome to MoDOT!

For more info

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Customer Relations Manager

Comments & Suggestions

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To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 30, 2014

St. Louis
District

- Home
- Central Office
- Districts
 - Northwest
 - Northeast
 - Kansas City
 - Central
 - St. Louis
 - Southwest
 - Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print
Entire Edition

Training Program Prepares Crew Leaders for Advancement

by Shaunda White

The Maintenance Leadership Academy initiated its kickoff for the crew leader's series in the St. Louis district on Jan. 16. The program is designed to prepare maintenance workers for career advancement.

The crew leader's series is a nine month program designed to provide maintenance crew leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to be highly effective in their current role and a path to promotion in a leadership position.

During the course of this program, crew leaders are taught lessons about effective leadership from the module *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, by John Maxwell. Through the crew leader's series, the participants learn skills from basic computer knowledge to setting goals and delegating tasks.

"We knew that we eventually would be faced with the challenge of preparing our next leaders for maintenance supervisor and superintendent roles. We needed a program that would ensure we would have quality employees with the abilities to fill those roles, and that is what MLA accomplishes," said Becky Allmeroth, district maintenance engineer.

The program originated in September of 2009 and was nominated as a Statewide Best Practice in 2011. For more information regarding the MLA program, please contact Becky Allmeroth at 314.453.1758.



Becky Allmeroth (standing), district maintenance engineer, speaks with maintenance workers at the crew leaders series kickoff held in the St. Louis district office on Jan. 16.

Final Thoughts on District Engineer's Vision for MoDOT's Future

by Andrew Gates

Editors Note: This article is part 3 of 3 on information from newest District Engineer Greg Horn and his vision for the St. Louis district.

What do you think every district employee should be focused on over the next five years?

Missouri is at a critical point in our history. Funding for transportation has dropped from about \$1.3 billion to \$745 million per year, and will drop even farther than that over the next few years. Missouri's transportation has always been funded mostly by gas tax and that has worked up until now. However, as we move forward people are becoming less dependant on fuel, (cars get better gas mileage and use other sources such as electricity, natural gas etc.) That is



great for the environment but not good for funding transportation. In the next few years the citizens of Missouri are going to have some tough choices to make.

Transportation is directly tied to economic development, and in order for Missouri to compete against other states, the people of Missouri are going to have to figure out how to fund transportation. Our role, as St. Louis District employees, is to make sure that the public recognizes that we are the best, most efficient and reliable DOT. We need to do our best with customer service every day so that the public realizes that if they invest in transportation, they can trust us to spend those dollars wisely. We need to be customer focused, which of course gets more difficult as our funds continue to dwindle. However, I am the optimist and believe that Missourians will understand that if they do invest in transportation, the opportunities are immense, and we have the capability of becoming one of the leading states in the nation.

Since you have spent 30 years at MoDOT, why do you think it's a good place to work?

I have thoroughly enjoyed every position that I have had with MoDOT. What makes it a great place is the people I have worked with. I have always believed that if you really don't like your job, you should quit and find something that you do like. Life is too short to not enjoy what you do. The leadership at MoDOT has always been open to new ideas and change. That's how we grow. It is the innovation of the people that work at MoDOT that has made us one of the best DOT's in the country. It is the management at MoDOT that not only allows that creativity, but encourages it.

April Rotter named Safety Employee for December

by Shaunda White



(Featured from left to right) Greg Horn, Scott Ernst, April Rotter, Lisa Lamons. April received her Safety Employee of the month certificate at the St. Louis district staff meeting on Jan. 28.

A MoDOT general services employee received the Safety Employee of the month recognition after ensuring that a fallen pedestrian received proper care. April Rotter, an equipment technician, was nominated for the recognition by her supervisor, Scott Ernst.

Last month while Rotter was test driving a MoDOT vehicle, she noticed an elderly man lying on the ground attempting to place a call on his cell phone. She immediately pulled over and offered assistance to the man. He advised her that he had fallen and was trying to call his son. April took it upon herself to contact 911, and then called the man's son for him. She also remained with the man until help arrived and he was safely placed in the ambulance.

"April's act of courage to ensure this pedestrian was safe is a true example of caring for the public's safety. For that, she is very deserving of the Safety Employee of the month recognition," said Lisa Lamons, district safety and health manager.

Missouri Announces Specifics on New Bridge Opening

The Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge will open to traffic at about noon on Feb. 9, 2014. On Feb. 8, Missouri and Illinois will join forces to celebrate the completion of the bridge. We are looking forward to having you come out and celebrate with us and the IDOT team!

There is a whole day of activities planned; some of them require registration and have fees.

Here’s a list of the activities and some other important information for those people wanting to participate in the festivities leading up to the bridge’s opening. Except where indicated, events are free:

- 8 a.m. – 6K Run.** Details on cost, where to meet and registration are available at: bigriverrunning.com/bridgerun.
- 10 a.m. – Cycling Time Trials.** Space is limited. Details on cost, where to meet and registration are available at bigriverrunning.com/bridgerun. In addition, those interested can participate in the biathalon, which allows them to compete in both the 6K run and the cycling time trials.
- Noon – The bridge opens to the public.**
- 2 p.m. – Ribbon cutting ceremony.**
- 3 p.m. – Ceremonial first crossing.** Participating in the crossing is limited to various military and classic car groups. All available spots for the crossing are filled.
- 4 p.m. – The bridge closes to the public.**

Sunday Feb. 9
Noon - The bridge opens to traffic

Parking around the bridge is very limited. Here’s how the general public can get to the new bridge:
From 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Metro transit will operate special shuttles to take people from downtown St. Louis to the new bridge and back. You are encouraged to take Metro transit to arrive downtown. To utilize the free bridge shuttles, park at any of the free Metro Park-Ride lots along the MetroLink system in Missouri and Illinois and take the train to the Convention Center MetroLink Station, or you can take MetroBus to Civic Center MetroLink Station and board an eastbound train to the Convention Center MetroLink Station. You must have valid fare to ride MetroBus and MetroLink. From the Convention Center Station, you can catch one of the free special bridge shuttles at:

- 6th Street north of Washington (west side of street)
- Washington and 7th Street at the Metro Store (north side of street)
- 9th Street between Washington Avenue and Convention Plaza (east side of street)
- 9th Street and Cole Street (east side of street)
- 11th Street and Cole Street (north side of street)

There are parking garages near all five of these pick up locations, if you prefer to drive downtown. Parking rates vary by facility.
Some tips for the day:

- The general public will not be allowed on the bridge until noon, because of the morning’s races and event set up.
- Please do not bring pets, large or hard-sided coolers, alcohol or glass bottles.
- Please do not bring skateboards, inline skates, skate shoes, scooters or other wheeled vehicles.
- For bike riders, the bridge may be very crowded, so please give fellow attendees plenty of space.

We hope to see you out there!

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Comments & Suggestions

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To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 30, 2014

Home
Central Office

Districts
Northwest
Northeast
Kansas City
Central
St. Louis
Southwest
Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print
Entire Edition

Southwest District

SW District at Work



CLEARING THE WAY - Neosho Seasonal Maintenance Worker Rocky Olbrey clears right of way along Route 43 north of Seneca in Newton County while Senior Maintenance Worker Mike Christenson follows behind in a protection truck. (Photo/David Mitchell)



DIGGING DEEP - Republic Senior Maintenance Worker Mark Aldridge uses a backhoe to dig a trench across Greene County Route Z at Farm Road 34 north of Willard in preparation to replace a drainage pipe. (Photo/David Mitchell)

Busy Construction Season Ahead, Stark Reality Looms

by David Mitchell

A new interchange near Osceola, a modified one near Joplin, traffic congestion relief at Route 171/Route 43 in Joplin and on south Glenstone Avenue in Springfield and a new northbound Route 65 bridge between Springfield and Ozark are among the projects that drivers will have to navigate during 2014.

The primary focus of the projects planned for 2014 is safety.

For example, at Route 171 and Route HH where an interchange ramp will be rebuilt this year, Assistant District Engineer Dan Salisbury calls the weaving of traffic between exits separated by only 500 feet and two lanes of traffic “uncomfortable” for drivers going between Joplin and Carthage.

That discomfort will be relieved by removing the existing eastbound exit ramp and replacing it with a partial folded diamond configuration.

Another project is the widening of Glenstone Avenue (Business 65) in Springfield between Battlefield Road and Route 60.

Work to add additional lanes and construction of a new intersection at Luster Avenue will relieve congestion and dangerous traffic backups on the westbound Route 60 to northbound Glenstone Avenue ramp



during peak traffic usage.

Construction projects in the Southwest District will total \$103 million in 2014, in addition to the \$25 million design/build project in Rogersville.

Eight large projects either begin construction or contracts will be let this year, include:

- A roundabout at Route 171 and Route 43 (Stone's Corner) near Joplin.
- New interchange across I-44/I-49 at mile marker 13 near the Crossroads Industrial Park in Joplin.
- New interchange at Route 13 and Route 82 near Osceola.
- Ramp improvements at Route 171 and Route HH near Carterville in Jasper County.
- New northbound Route 65 bridge over Farmer's Branch Creek between Springfield and Ozark in Christian County.
- Widening Glenstone Avenue (Bus. 65) between Battlefield Road and Route 60 in Springfield.
- Intersection improvements at Route 14 and Cheyenne Road in Nixa and at Route CC and Cheyenne Road near Fremont Hills.
- "Project Freeway" design/build project along Route 60 in Rogersville.

Stark Reality Looms for Future Projects

The Southwest District expects a strong construction program from 2014-2016, but uncertainty about future federal funding, declining fuel tax revenues and increasing road construction costs prompted the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission to stop adding new projects to its five-year construction budget and to suspend the popular Cost-Share Program this month.

“The suspension of the Cost-Share program will have a major impact on our district,” said District Engineer Becky Baltz. “Many communities in southwest Missouri have participated in projects which improve safety and relieve congestion and those projects happened quicker than they would have otherwise.”

Last week, leaders from MoDOT, Missouri Chamber of Commerce, State Legislature and the Highway Patrol, among others, outlined dwindling revenue for transportation and its consequences.

MoDOT leaders say without funding increases, the department will struggle to maintain the current system.

“Believe me when I say this (stop adding projects to the construction budget and ending the Cost-Share program) is not what we wanted to do,” said MHTC chair Joe Carmichael. “But when considering the financial forecast for the rest of the decade, we had no choice. We aren’t even going to have enough money to maintain the system we have today.”

Winter Weather Keeping SW District Crews Busy

by Angela Eden

The winter of 2013-2014 is shaping up to be a busy one and an expensive one for the Southwest District.

From Nov. 22 through Jan. 24, the Southwest District experienced nine different winter storms which required crews to plow and treat roads. Crews also were on the road eight different times across the district to patrol for frost on bridges.

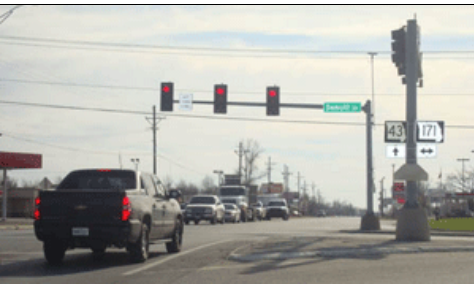


Winter storms in December and early January had a major impact on the Southwest District's maintenance budget and supplies. (Photo / Bob

Interchange improvements are scheduled this year for Route 171 / HH near Carterville in Jasper County.



This bridge across Farmer's Branch Creek on Route 65 between Springfield and Ozark in Christian County will be replaced.



The intersection at Route 171 / 43 in the village of Airport Drive near Joplin will be converted to a roundabout.

District Maintenance Engineer Michael Middleton said, to date, the Southwest District has spent \$7.3 million dollars to fight winter storms.

“It’s been our toughest winter as the Southwest District,” Middleton said. “We haven’t had major events, but the events have eaten up our resources.”

The winter weather has been tough on the budget, with maintenance spending \$750,000 more on winter operations than expected.

Assistant to the District Engineer Scott Bachman said the district is already looking at ways to shift funds to maintenance. However, any surpluses in the district’s budget will be minimal.

Edwards) Bachman said an active weather pattern during winter months is always a possibility even with tight budgets.

“Winter operations is an expectation and a responsibility,” Bachman said. “We have to respond.”

A busy winter weather season means maintenance will need to defer some of its bigger warmer weather activities. It will mean pushing off the purchase of cold mix asphalt until June instead of in April, Middleton said.

Here’s a look at the numbers, with at least two more months of winter on the way:

- Labor hours: 84,000
- Miles driven: 1.1 million (44 trips around the Earth at the Equator)
- Salt used: 24,250 tons

Despite the busy winter season, Middleton said there have been very few equipment issues and no serious injuries while plowing snow. He credits that to the outstanding efforts of maintenance crew members.

“We have a phenomenal group of men and women in our trucks,” he said. “They do a great job.”

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To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 30, 2014



Home
Central Office

Districts

- Northwest
- Northeast
- Kansas City
- Central
- St. Louis
- Southwest
- Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print
Entire Edition

Qulin Employees Go Above and Beyond

Over the past month, Missouri has experienced a variety of roadway conditions. From heavy rainfall and flooding to snow and ice, the Southeast District has seen it all. Employees are called to action at any time, and it hasn't gone unnoticed.

The Southeast District received a letter from Ms. Angela Adams from Memphis, Tenn., regarding her experience with two Southeast District employees.

Adams recalled her encounter with Jeff Jarrell, Qulin Maintenance Supervisor, and David Rainey, Qulin Crew Leader.

Her day started early in Memphis, Tenn., with plans to travel to Poplar Bluff, Mo., on Dec. 23, 2013 for a family Christmas celebration. By 7 p.m., Adams had reached Qulin, Mo. Traveling on Highway 53, she noticed a Road Closed sign and stopped at the nearest convenience store.

While at the store, she noticed a MoDOT truck and Jarrell and Rainey. Adams approached them to inquire how she might get to Poplar Bluff, Mo., as quickly as possible.

Jarrell explained that the Black River was out of its banks and had covered the roadway in a few areas. He further explained the waters were receding, and they had been using a pilot car system throughout the day in an effort to keep the road open and help travelers safely navigate the roadway. He added that they had just closed the road for fear of black ice through the overnight hours.

Jarrell and Rainey were preparing for the next day, and Adams explained her predicament. This had been the first extended trip she had taken in two years. Following several suggestions for detour routes, Jarrell could see that Adams was not confident traveling on unknown roadways. Having heard her concerns, Jarrell agreed to drive with Adams through the closed roadway.

During the trip, Jarrell stayed in contact with Rainey and helped calm Adams' nerves. Once they made it through, Jarrell and Rainey finally ended their day.

Adams wrote: "If it were not for Mr. Jeffrey Jarrell and Mr. David Rainey, there would NOT HAVE BEEN A FAMILY CHRISTMAS! This Christmas was not only the celebration of Christ's Holy birth, but my celebration for being able to be with my family for Christmas, after two years of being alone. Thank you!!!"

Jarrell exchanged phone numbers with Adams and asked that she call before her trip back to Memphis. Instead he contacted her and suggested she take Route 60 to Interstate 55 as a safer route home.

Adams praised Jarrell and Rainey for their efforts to go above and beyond the call of duty.

"For Mr. Jarrell, a Supervisor of MoDOT, to take his job this serious and have mercy for a complete stranger is A CHRISTMAS STORY WORTH TELLING! I hope you concur with me," she wrote.

We do concur. Special thanks to Jeff Jarrell and David Rainey who set the bar very high for providing all travelers Outstanding Customer Service!



Qulin Crew Leader David Rainey (l) and Qulin Maintenance Supervisor Jeff Jarrell (r) helped motorists, such as Ms. Angela Adams, make it to their destinations and family gatherings safely during the holiday season.

I-55 Project Wins MAPA Award



During the Missouri Asphalt Pavement Association (MAPA) Conference held this January, the Southeast District's project on Interstate 55 in Scott County won a paving award for quality and smoothness.

An \$8.5 million dollar contract for the project was awarded to Chester Bross Construction Co., in December 2012. The improvements included resurfacing north and southbound lanes and shoulders of I-55 from Exit 80 to Exit 60.

Despite a difficult start with the work halted in the spring due to impacts from flooding, MoDOT's contractor continued to work to finish the project before winter. Chester Bross compressed their schedule by working long hours six or seven days a week.

Pictured: Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger, Asst. Resident Engineer Darius Dowdy and representatives from Chester Bross and MAPA accept the award for the I-55 project in Scott County.

SE District Featured in *Better Roads*

In addition to providing our customers a great snapshot of how MoDOT crews are working to keep them safe, photos and videos of MoDOT's winter operations also provide the media a great opportunity!

The Southeast District's use of the TowPlow followed by a tractor plow was recently featured in Better Roads' electronic newsletter.

The article, by Tina Grady Barbaccia, is part of the "Winter Weather War Stories" series. In the article, Barbaccia writes, "I must say, the tow plow is a BEAST, but that is the kind of plow I want clearing my roadways."



To view the video, click the image above.

Thanks again to Lawrence Schumer for sending Customer Relations a video of the plows in action! To read the article, please [click here](#).

SE District Kudos

Mr. Edgar Myers of Cape Girardeau County wrote:
I just want to say thanks for such service and timeliness with the internet based MODOT repair I requested yesterday morning. I placed the request at 7:15 a.m. and was heading out on my bike at 8:30 a.m.. To my surprise, the road crew was there, had already filled the hole and was finalizing the repair!!! Now, that is premium customer service. Thanks a bunch! I only recently heard about this website, and find it very helpful and useful. Thanks again!

A gentleman from Ste. Genevieve called to say:
The crews in Ste. Genevieve have done a great job recently!

For more info

Nicole Thieret
Customer Relations Manager

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

